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Frankfurt Easter Island Exhibition Is Spectacular

The undersigned had the good fortune to travel to Germany in May and twice visited the Senckenberg Museum of Natural History in Frankfurt to see the exhibit "1500 Jahre Kultur der Osterinsel" (1500 Years of Culture in Easter Island). Some while ago the museum, the largest natural history museum in Germany, and the Deutsch-Ibero-Amerikanischen Gesellschaft had awarded Dr. Heide-Margaret Esen-Baur facilities and financial support to mount this exhibit which officially opened on April 5 of this year and will run until September 3, 1989. Over 50 sponsors contributed additional funds or valuable assistance, and a nearly equal number of museums and individuals from 16 countries around the world loaned often priceless island artifacts or other interesting objects for display.

The exhibit was open seven days a week, in the venerable old red-brick museum building. Upon entering the front door, the visitor was led by signs to the large central exhibit hall normally reserved for several sizeable dinosaur skeletons. However, for this new exhibition, half of the floor space was occupied by "lifesize" (and amazingly "life-like") fiberglass reproductions of two of the best known moai heads and torsos from Rano Raraku, accompanied by a fiberglass casting of a portion of the finely constructed facade of the *ahu* known as Vinapu 1. It is an interesting juxtaposition. The seemingly massive Easter Island statues made the large but fragile dinosaur skeletons appear almost insignificant. The attention that they received demonstrated that *moai* are highly effective attention-getters.

In a large second room beyond the central hall, the visitor is introduced to Easter Island by a series of maps, charts, and photographs, followed by exhibits of contemporary wood and stone carvings, a selection of books, and other items of interest. Particularly noteworthy are three original *rongorongo* boards dating from the 19th century (two from Rome, one from Leningrad), and the famous coral-and-scoria *moai* eye found near Ahu Nau Nau at Anakena, again the original item loaned to Frankfurt for the exhibit.

But it was upstairs where most of the treasures were to be found. There in a single, large, well-illuminated room one found the most remarkable collection of Easter Island pieces imaginable, exquisite examples of *kavakava*, *moai tangata*, *moko*, *rei miro*, *tahonga*, *ua*, *ao* and *rapa*, *tapa* figures, and feather headdresses, just to name some of the more spectacular items. Most date from the Late 19th century, but at least two *moai kavakava* are said to have been brought back by Captain Cook. It was a breathtaking display.

On my second visit it was my pleasure to meet with Dr. Esen-Baur and was given a private guided tour of the entire exhibition.

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The "Reimiro" of Barcelona and Its Inscriptions

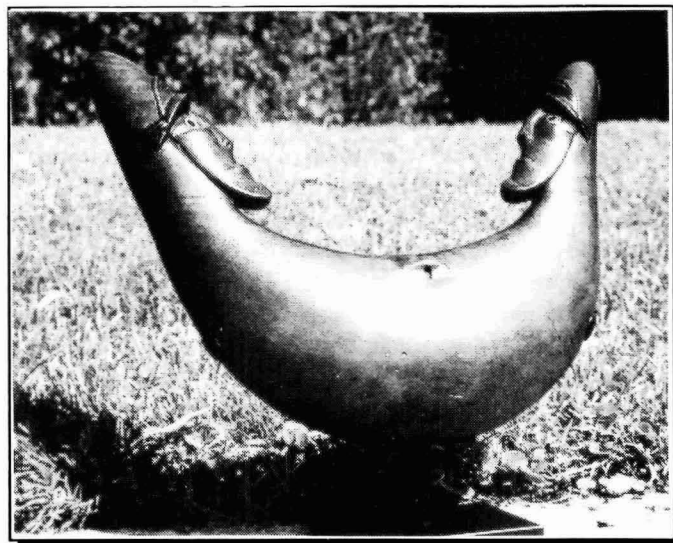
Beautifully Carved Artifact from Easter Island
Previously Unknown

Francesc Amorós i Gonell

*Homage to Sr. Albert Folch i Rusiñol (1922-1988),
maecenas and art collector from Catalonia, Spain*

My intention is to present and describe iconographically, an Easter Island carving which has remained unknown to scholars up to the present day. The first person to actually report the existence in Barcelona (Spain) of such a wooden crescent-shaped breast pendant with *rongorongo* inscriptions was the Spanish researcher Francisco Mellén Blanco in 1986.

Some years later, and after quite an intensive search, I managed to find the aforementioned artifact in Barcelona itself. It is, in fact, part of a private Collection, which is well known for its excellent and numerous pieces of primitive artwork from Oceania and Africa. This magnificent collection was gathered together by Albert Folch and Eudald Serra, who are co-authors of the book *Arte de Papua y Nueva Guinea*, Barcelona 1976.



Easter Island appears in this collection, though quite briefly, with the following: a *moai paapaa*; a pair of *moai tangata*; a doubtful *moai kavakava*; and lastly a small *reimiro*. Hereafter it will be referred to as the "Reimiro of Barcelona."

The information circulated in 1986 by Mellén about a *reimiro*

Continued on following page...

found in Barcelona was, however, only gathered from what appeared in an advertising leaflet, printed in 1975 by an art gallery in the same city. Therefore this author did not have the chance to closely inspect and examine its characteristic in detail. One such characteristic is the *rongo rongo* inscriptions, which at the time was mistakenly thought to be of ancient origin. The actual dating of the *reimiro* of Barcelona and the unique peculiarities of the ideograms are what I intent to clarify.

After analyzing the *reimiro in situ*, I am able to confirm that the material from which it has been carved is dark amber wood, a usual characteristic of *toromiro*. It has the two common eyes of black obsidian set in rings of fish bone, inlaid on each side. The exact measurements are 293 mm long, 225 mm high and 33 mm thick.

The exceptional accuracy and precision of the carvings of this small *reimiro* in all its details, as well as the faultless condition of the wood, indicate the *reimiro* of Barcelona is not very old. It is worthwhile to emphasize here the impressive serenity that the expert hand of the carver wanted to infuse to the two anthropomorphic faces which crown the ends of the crescent shape or *reimarama*. The slightly turned-up beards are unlike other known *reimiro*. Its aquiline features, executed with excellent precision and neatness are stressed by a curved nose, which is quite short in proportion to the total length of the head (12 cm). From the eyebrows extends a trapezoidal shape which seems to take the place of the ear. The exaggerated eyebrow in the shape of a double visor resembles a helmet, similar to the *reimiro* of London.

In my opinion, the *reimiro* of Barcelona can be distinguished from the standard types of such breast ornaments by its closed curvature which makes the two bifacial bearded faces look at each other. They, in fact, face each other so perfectly that one is reminded of a crescent moon rather than the open shape of a boat. There is a ~~recently restored fracture on each neck, just under the heads themselves.~~ In the central part of the upper curvature there is a protuberance vertically drilled, with a single suspension hole, which would probably have allowed it to be worn on the breast.

The *reimiro* does not, however, show any obvious signs of continuous use. Its shape is not flat, but adopts a convex curvature in such a way that the two ends are set further back from the central part. The reverse side, apart from the two anthropomorphic faces which are perfectly finished, has only two unequally carved groves. These pointed engravings are parallel and follow the curvature of the *reimiro*. The upper grove measures 12 cm and shows a triangular section of 8 x 4 mm on its central part. The lower one of 18 cm has a width of 10 x 4 mm. Finally, there is the number which corresponds to a cataloging inventory: the present one is in white and the other is in red.

The most relevant detail is an asymmetrical line of ideographic signs engraved on the lower boarder on the convex side. This is similar to the famous *reimiro* of London, on exhibit at the British

Museum. On the *reimiro* of Barcelona about fifty-one incised characters can be counted. They are fine superficial incisions, cut out by a sharp instrument of great precision. Being so harmonious and uniform they seem quite different from the simple and figurative, ancient and classical *rongo rongo*. I understand its inscription demonstrate a writing technique which is purer and more proportioned. It appears to be a calligraphic simplification, much more ductile than the ones previously known.

In order to describe the *reimiro* of Barcelona's inscriptions with the minimum of methodology, I will take from Cambell and Silva (1970) the following classification for **Tables 1 to 5**. A first analysis identifies an approximate total of fifty-one ideographic signs. These are gathered in seven basic types corresponding to each of the tables. However we must not reject the possibility that some of them might belong to another compound sign, so consequently the total number would vary.



Table 1: The komari Sign (vulva)

Small size—4 mm. There are six glyphs of this nature, all of them without interior vertical strokes.



Table 2: The horehore tu'u tu'u Sign (vertical sticks)

Two of them are extremely small. There are nine which can be found alone as well as consisting of two or three compositions. It seems they are always gathered with others of a large size (15 mm).

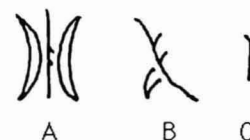
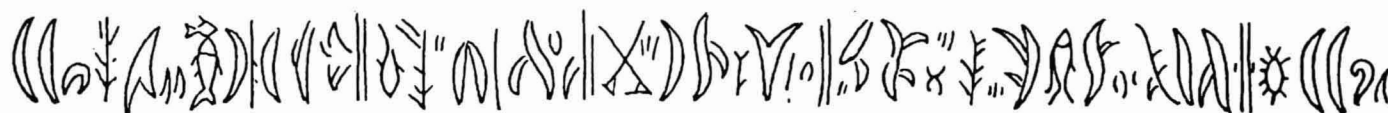
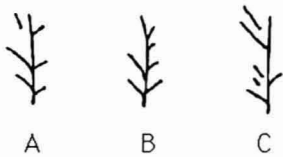


Table 3: The horehore tukituki Sign (large sticks with small marks)

Medium size (9 mm) or large size.



The Complete Barcelona Rei Miro Script



**Table 4: The horehore tumu-miro Sign
(non-fruit bearing trees)**

These are of the *aka-aka* variety, that is to say, being without roots. Large size. Very abundant in classical writing, as well as in Tomenika's "Ta'u."

Table 5: An X-Shaped Sign

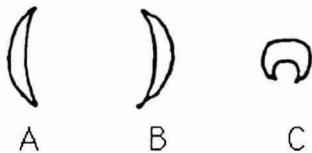


A

It has the lower ends widened in triangular shape and is large sized. Similar shapes have been indicated by Chauvet and Barthel, although it does appear in a fish-shaped tablet which is found in the Concepción Museum.

The Closed Outline Signs

I have identified 19 glyphs, all of them of closed outlines and with pointed ends. I have arranged them in three different basic groups: single, compound and S-shaped; and I put them into thirteen modalities from A to M. The basic forms A, B and I are found in the classical writing and also in Tomenika's "ta'u" type of writing. On the other hand they are not represented among the ideographic signs of the fish-shaped tablet at Concepción. The remainder are of forms peculiar only to the *reimiro* of Barcelona.



**Table 6.1: The Single Crescent-shape Sign (*marama*)
Large Size.**

A: (Métraux, p. 406, no. 5a)?

[C: *marama*? Medium size. (Métraux, p. 408, no. 73a)?]



Table 6.2: The Compound Crescent-shape Signs

[H: *komari*? (Métraux, p. 406, no. 28a)?]



Table 6.3: The S-Shaped Form

The *ta'u* and the Classical *rongorongo* Signs

In this last section I include the remaining signs which appear on the *reimiro* of Barcelona. They are common to classical *rongorongo* writing on paper or wood in one way or another, as well as to the non-classical writing which has been known since 1915 by the name *ta'u*, and which was put onto paper by the native Tomenika at the request of Mrs. Routledge.

Table 7.1: The "ta'u" Signs

(According to the opinion of Canbell and Silva)



A

B

These signs would be represented by the glyphs A and B, each one corresponding to the sign *ra'a*? (sun) and to another one that also looks like a question mark (B). I do not take into account either the already classical

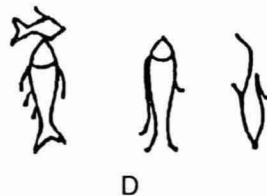
crescent shaped glyph or the S-shaped form, included in Table 6. Medium size.

Table 7.2: The Classical *rongorongo* Signs



C

Sign C is very similar to the one classified by Barthel as *kava*, but it looks like the one described by Métraux. This is of a small size and is probably a compound.



D

Concerning the D series represented by the *ika* (fish) figure, one can observe a gradation in the simplification of shape. Large size. Appears a very unusual form.



E

We can find the E character on its own or in conjunction with other signs and it is classical. In general it is believed to be used to separate phrases. Large sizes.

Continued on page 9...

The Petroglyphs of Puako, Hawai'i

Two of the largest petroglyph sites at Puako in South Kohala, Hawai'i, were documented in August-September (1989) under the auspices of the University Research Expeditions Program, University of California at Berkeley, and with the permission of Mauna Lani Resort and the Historic Sites Section of the Department of Land and Natural Resources, State of Hawaii. Although these sites have been well known to locals for many years and their location is listed in guide books to the area, intensive scientific documentation of the petroglyphs had not previously been done. Following the six weeks in the field, a brief seminar was held at Mauna Lani Hotel to discuss options and ideas for conservation and preservation of the sites.

At Puako, petroglyphs are found on smooth lava domes (*pahoehoe*). The major site here, Kao A, has an intense concentration over most of its exposed surface. Soil and vegetation cover portions of the surrounding areas, suggesting that the site probably is much larger than what is now visible. Aside from Kao A, the site known as Paniau C was also documented during this study. Other petroglyph sites, most of them to the northeast, were mapped but not recorded due to lack of time.

Previous reports on the sites of Puako were made by the Bishop Museum (1964), Cox and Stasack (1970), and Kirch (1973, 1979). Many reports have relied heavily on Cox and Stasack's (1970) interpretations, repeating their emphasis on the *makahiki* ceremony, representations of the god Lono, and/or marks made by travellers.

The purpose of the project was to systematically document the petroglyphs at Puako, specifically those that are most likely to be effected by future visitors to the sites. Kao A, the largest single site in the area, is to be developed as a tourist attraction. It was thus considered important to acquire a full inventory of the rock art. Paniau C, through which Kao A is now accessed, was also documented; both sites have been impacted by numerous visitors over the years.

Over 2000 individual petroglyph elements were scientifically documented at these two sites. Cox and Stasack's (1970:85) estimate of approximately 3000 units in this area is probably quite accurate, if the sites along the Kao Trail and others at Paniau are included.

Both Paniau C and Kao A were mapped and divided into numbered sections. Within these sections, petroglyph panels¹ were given letter designations and were recorded in their entirety by means of 20 centimeter string grids and scale drawings made on grid paper. Thus all motifs were documented in their context and with their associated designs. A standardized form including pertinent information was filled out for each panel. This material was supplemented by a photographic record.

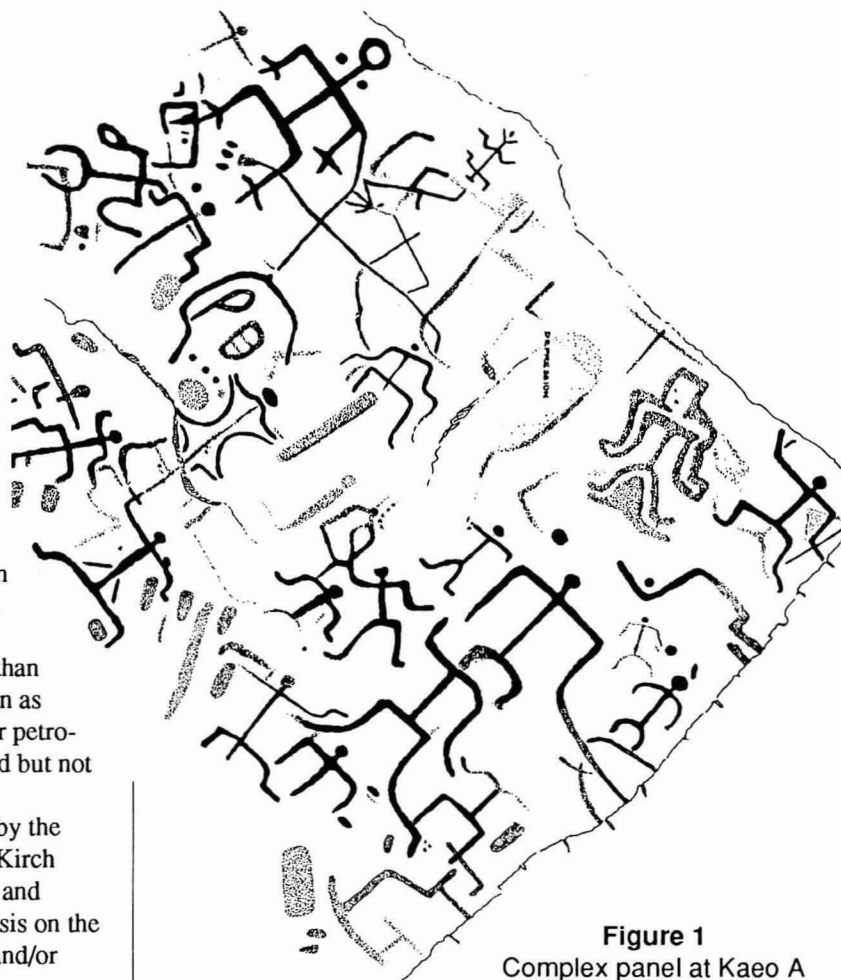


Figure 1
Complex panel at Kao A

Paniau C

Paniau C is the designation for the first large petroglyph site inland from Puako Beach Drive. A well-worn path leads in from the road. Encompassing approximately 40 x 40 meters of *pahoehoe*, the site is ringed by kiawe trees.

The designs here tend to be faint. They appear and disappear, and many can only be seen when there is a raking side light. Others are visible simply because lichen tends to grow in the peck marks.

Paniau C is notable for its long lines of stick figures,² (Figure 2) and for the remarkable variation in size between small (12 x 20 cm) and large (276 x 236 cm) anthropomorphic motifs (Figure 4). One panel contains lettering; this is the only historic element noted at either Paniau C or Kao A.

Kao A

Kao A encompasses approximately 2000 square meters of *pahoehoe*; the design motifs have certain special features. Superimpositioning, a feature not noted at Paniau C, is often the rule at this site. Many anthropomorphs are "compound figures," that is, they share arms or legs with other elements. Some share a

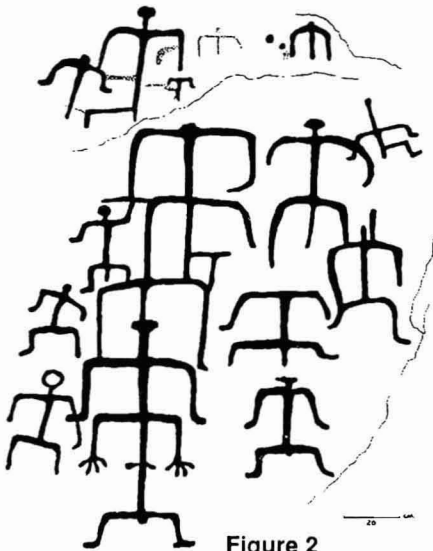


Figure 2

It is tempting to suggest that this panel may represent a clan, family or geneological record. Kao A.

suggest that something specific was being indicated.

Petroglyphs of footprints are prominent at Kao A. These range from very large to tiny, and may be fully pecked out or merely indicated with outline. Tiny feet nearly always appear in pairs and are the same size.

Anthropomorphs, which make up the bulk of the design elements, often display unusual features such as a circle on each side of the head or neck, or a head that is simply a curved line. A few have outsized round heads with eyes, and some have forked heads. We recorded several figures with vulvas; only one vulva-like motif was found detached, all others were associated with a human figure. (see Figure 5.)

A few petroglyphs at Kao A that may almost be considered as bas relief were noted; these are rare in Hawaiian rock art (Cox and Stasack 1970:61). Not fully in relief as they do not actually stand up from the rock, these do have pecking around them suggesting that some modeling of form was being attempted.

Great variation in pecking at Kao A was clearly evident, suggesting different carvers and different tools. Some elements are crudely pecked whereas others are made with great delicacy and fine pecking. At times it was possible to note which design was carved first and which one cut through an earlier motif.

Earlier studies of Puako (Cox and Stasack 1970:61) all suggest that it is a very early site. The Bishop Museum report (1964:6-7) notes few triangular-bodied anthropomorphs at Kao A, which are considered a late feature and they also suggest this site has considerable antiquity because of lack of historic elements in the art, the intense superimpositioning of the designs, linear type stick figures, and profile or crouching figures. Our study verifies these opinions.

Of particular interest is the occurrence here of anthropomorphs in profile, in squatting configuration. These bear an uncanny

backbone. It is possible that these combined elements refer to family geneology, ancestors, and descent.

Notable also are the occurrences of disjointed arms and legs that do not connect with bodies and incomplete anthropomorphs. Judging whether a design is "incomplete" or deliberately made in that fashion is very subjective but enough figures with missing arms or legs were recorded to

resemblance to the famous birdman figure from Easter Island. No actual contact is suggested; rather, it likely reflects a shared Polynesian heritage.

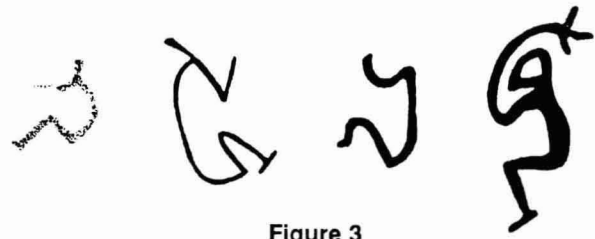


Figure 3

Figures from Kao A that bear a strong resemblance to the birdman motif of Rapa Nui.

Interpretation

Petroglyphs were not idle markings, but were the end result of chants, prayers, and offerings to the gods. It was not quality of workmanship that mattered, but the power gained by this activity.

This area must have possessed ritual power, perhaps as a place of pilgrimage where offerings in the form of petroglyphs were made. The ancient Hawaiians who carved these petroglyphs were undoubtedly drawn to the smooth surfaces provided by the *pahoehoe* at Puako. However, many sections of *pahoehoe* in the Puako area are untouched, while those at Kao A, Paniau C, and others to the northeast are covered with motifs. This indicates that certain rock surfaces were selected because they exhibited some special features or contained mana. Perhaps they "revealed" themselves to the *kahuna* (priests) as sacred places. We can be reasonably certain that they were selected as the result of some ritual or sacred formula. Conditions of *kapu* and *mana* (supernatural forces) partly, or wholly, guided the choice of sites (Cox and Stasack 1970:21).

We can but guess at the intent of the makers of these petroglyphs; surely they had ritual purposes. The designs probably referred to family geneology, ancestors, and 'aumakua. Their significance may have only been fully understood by those initiated into a select group, for they likely contained secret allusions fraught with symbolism and, typical for Hawaiian culture, had multiple hidden meanings (*kaona*) (Cox and Stasack 1970:67).

The technical quality and craftsmanship that we see in Hawaiian petroglyph making is not comparable to their wood carvings or featherwork. But it is important to remember that it was not workmanship that counted but the correct chants, prayers and offerings that accompanied the process; these elements gave the designs power and connected them to the gods.

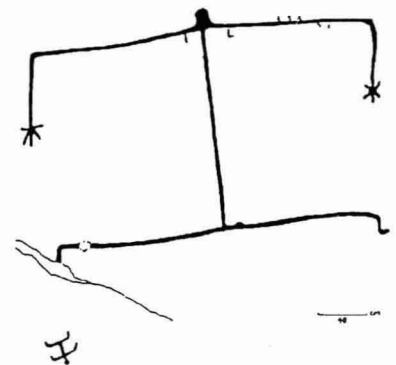


Figure 4

An example of the remarkable variation in size between petroglyphs. These two are on a single panel at Paniau C.

Petros of Puako... continued from previous page

Impact and Preservation

There is little doubt that we are losing the petroglyphs. Foot traffic is impacting them, rubbings wear down the surfaces, or leave unsightly paint and crayon markings, and abortive attempts to make castings have destroyed others.

Vandalism at both Kao A and at Paniau C consists of attempts to make rubbings and/or molds; numerous fine examples of petroglyphs have been ruined by paint or latex products being put into the grooves of the designs. A fair amount of motifs have been disfigured by crayons and chalk.

The "normal" type of vandalism, such as names and dates painted or scratched on the designs, is fortunately very rare at Puako. However, well-meaning but uninformed visitors to these sites need to be aware that their efforts to obtain replicas of the designs are causing their destruction.

An intense interest in Hawaiian petroglyphs is evident from the constant stream of visitors we experienced during the six weeks we worked at the Puako sites; people came through the sites from early morning to dusk. All sought information. The most frequently asked question concerned the age of the petroglyphs, followed by questions concerning their method of manufacture, purpose and meaning. Many visitors were shocked by the paint, latex, resin, and crayon left on the petroglyphs by past attempts to make rubbings.

However, a large proportion of visitors to the sites arrived with paper or cloth and a variety of materials with which to make rubbings. Most, when we talked to them and requested they not make rubbings, were cooperative. Others became quite hostile. Many local residents stated they had made them for years, and intended to continue doing so. Some had come to the site years ago as

part of a class excursion when the entire class made rubbings!

During the next few years, the Puako sites will undergo changes. A well-designed plan has been proposed by Mauna Lani Resorts for the curation of the petroglyph sites. It is hoped that, when implemented, the petroglyphs will be secure from further vandalism, but still visible for the interested visitor. As manifestations of belief and power, prayer and offering, the petroglyphs at Puako reflect a remnant of ancient ritual life, and represent an important non-renewable resource. Part of the archaeological heritage of the islands, they deserve to be preserved and protected, not just for the descendants of old Hawaii but for all who care about and treasure the past.

Georgia Lee, Ph.D.
Los Osos, California



NOTES

¹ A panel refers to a discrete group of designs on a section of *pahoehoe*, as defined by the shape of the lava.

² Long serpentine lines of stick figures have been referred to as "marching men" by some. We prefer to describe them in a non-subjective way.

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Acknowledgement

A special thanks to Mikilani Ho, who assisted in the field project, and to Leilani Hino, Mauna Lani Resorts, who organized the seminar on conservation.

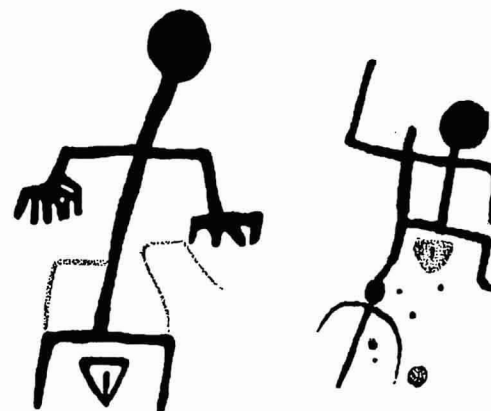
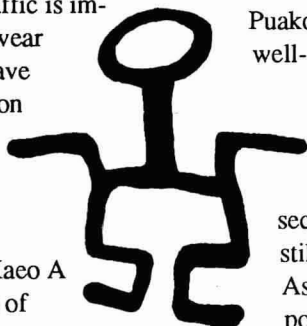


Figure 5
Examples of figures with vulva from different panels at Kao A.

Senckenberg Museum's Easter Island Symposium

The Research Institute of the Senckenberg Museum hosted a meeting in Frankfurt from August 30 to September 2 titled "Status and Perspective of Easter Island Research," in conjunction with the Senckenberg Easter Island exhibit. This is the first international meeting regarding Easter Island since that of 1984, which was held on Rapa Nui.

Papers were presented by numerous experts on Rapa Nui culture, history and archaeology; these will be published in 1990. Particularly noted was the openness of the meeting and freedom of interchange among the participants.

The exhibit in Frankfurt drew over 150,000 people; it next moves to Brussels where it will be displayed at the Musees Royaux d'Art et d'Histoire from January 26 to April 29, 1990.

Listed below are the talks given and the papers read and discussed, in the order of their appearance. They are scheduled for publication early in 1990. Papers not in English will include an English abstract.

Begrüßung der Teilnehmer by Prof. Willi Ziegler, Director of the Senckenberg Museum

Zur Zielsetzung des Symposiums by Dr. Heide-Margaret Esen-Baur, Kronberg

Religious Terminology of Easter Island and Polynesia by Dr. Horst Cain, Köln

Ethnological and Folklore Data in the Symbolic Interpretation of Easter Island Art Objects by Dr. Irene Fedorova, Leningrad

The Mystery of Rapanui by Wilfred Schuhmacher, Gadstrup

La Profecía de Renga Varevare by Prof. Olaf Blixen, Montevideo

Wege durch die Nacht. Rongorongo-Studien auf dem Santiagostab by Prof. Thomas S. Barthel, Tübingen

Problems of Methods in Interpreting Easter Island Data by Prof. Jean Guiart, Paris

Is a New Approach to Decipher Rongorongo Necessary? by Jacques Vignes, Paris

The Katherine Routledge Notes and Photos: Their Importance for Easter Island by Prof. Charles Love, Rock Springs, Wyoming

Cartografía Histórica de la Isla de Pascua en el Siglo XVIII Acompañada de Algunos Datos Etnológicos y Arqueológicos by Francisco Mellén Blanco, Madrid

How to Make and Move an Easter Island

Statue by Prof. Charles Love, Rock Springs, Wyoming

Reconstruction of the Transport of Moai by Pavel Pavel, Strakonice

Settlement Patterns on Easter Island by Patricia Vargas C., Santiago

The Lost Observatories of Rapa Nui by Prof. William Liller, Viña del Mar

Tratamiento Enconservación Sobre un Moai en Isla de Pascua by Mónica Bahamondes P., Santiago

Die Konservierung des Moai Hanga Kio'e—Methoden und Tragweite der Restaurierung by Dr. Michael Roth, Burghausen

Changes in Easter Island Flora—Comments on Selected Families by Dr. Georg Zizka, Frankfurt

Le Palmier des Pascuans Daté au Tandetron by Hélène Valadas, Paris
Les Objects en Toromiro des Collections du Musée de L'Homme, Paris by Dr. Catherine Orliac, Paris

Discovery and Cultivation of Sophora Toromiro by Dr. Wolfram Lobin, Köln

In-Vitro Regeneration of Sophora Toromiro by Prof. Jacobsen, Köln

Führung Durch die Osterinsel-Ausstellung by Dr. Heide-Margaret Esen-Baur, Kronberg

Frankfurt Exhibition... continued from front page

Among other things, she told me that the pieces, insured for many millions of dollars, were personally selected by her after an around-the-world tour of museums and private collections. I was delighted to learn that copies will be made of one or two dozen pieces and donated to the Sebastian Englert Museum on Easter Island. Conforming to agreements made with Chilean authorities, including Sr. Mario Arnello, director of Chile's museums, the molds for the fiberglass *moai* were destroyed after the first successful castings were made. Where the existing reproductions will go next, and finally, had not yet been determined.

Unquestionably, the most valuable by-product of this extraordinary exhibit is the Catalog-Handbook prepared and edited by Dr. Esen-Baur and colleagues. With 326 pages and 332 photographs, 125 in color,

the book will surely become one of the classics of 20th centuries literature about the Island.

Entitled "1500 Jahre Kulture der Osterinsel" and subtitled "Schätze aus dem Land des Hotu Matu'a" (Treasures from the Land of Hotu Matu'a), it contains 15 articles (in German) including contributions from Georgia Lee, Thomas Barthel, Christian Walter, Dr. Esen-Baur, and two people intimately involved in the making of the fiberglass reproductions, Ursula Hänig and Dieter F. Sauer. At US \$17.50 (plus postage) the book is a steal and can be ordered from the Deutsch-Ibero-Amerikanische Gesellschaft E.V., Gräfstrasse 83, 6000 Frankfurt 90, West Germany. One hopes that before long, an English translation will become available. It will soon be published in both French and Flemish.

Finally, I should report that Dr. Esen-

Baur expressed immense concern and considerable dismay over the reported damage done to the two *moai* when the casting material was removed. It was her sincere contention that except for some of the pebbly matter that the winter's rains would have removed anyway, the only material that peeled off when the casting material was stripped away was the thin outer layer of lichen and organic matter that naturally and quickly turns the original ochre-colored lava tuff to grey. She reported that before-and-after photographs clearly show damage to have been inconsequential. Until I am shown clear evidence to the contrary, I have to believe her.

William Liller
Instituto Isaac Newton
Ministerio de Educacion
de Chile



Publications

Bierbach, Annette and Horst Cain. Make from Hiva to Rapa Nui: An attempt to shed new light on the old topic of the origin of Rapa Nui Culture. *Baessler-Archiv*, Neue Folge, Band XXXVI, Berlin (1988:399-454).

Blixen, Olaf. Los Akuaku. *Comunicaciones Antropologicas del Museo de Historia Natural de Montevideo*, 13(11):1-24.

Lee, Georgia. Some comments on "The BBC and Easter Island History by Peter Gathercole." *Pacific Arts Newsletter* 29:30-31, July 1989.

—. 1979. Easter Island: Mysterious Past, Uncertain Future. *South American Explorer*. August, No. 22. Denver & Lima.

Within this rather obscure publication, Dr. Lee presents an unusually straightforward telling of Rapanui history since the coming of Europeans. Readers of her other writings will be surprised to find nothing here concerning rock art or the island's other archaeological features. Nothing is mentioned about the mysterious history of the past. Instead we are told of the plight of the Rapanui people throughout historical times, with a particular emphasis on the current, seeming hopeless, situation of young islanders—those who were overeducated on the mainland and on their return to their island home are unable to use their new found knowledge.

The obligatory tourist information presented in this article is helpful to the first time visitor to the island, giving helpful hints for finding lodging outside of the regular hotels. There are even comments on choosing the right horse for exploring the island's rocky terrain. *Reviewed by William Trench.*

Ramirez, José Miguel. *Cultura Rapanui. Serie Patrimonio Cultural Chileno, Coleccion Culturas Aborigenes*, Departamento de Extension Cultural del Ministerio de Educacion, Santiago, 1988. 97 pages, 45 full color plates, black and white line drawings, bibliography.

Schuhmacher, W. Wilfried. 1989. *The Linguistic Aspect of Thor Heyerdahl's Theory*. Carl Winter Universitätsverlag. Heidelberg.

This slim volume contains a discussion of the ubiquitous "Heyerdahl Question" from a linguistic approach.

Hidden beneath often unintelligible jargon are strong arguments "disproving" the possibility of a South American colonization of Polynesia, and Easter Island in particular.

Except that Heyerdahl's theories periodically enter the consciousness of new generations of readers interested in exotic Polynesia, one wonders why disclaimers must continue to be presented. Still, Schuhmacher insists there is a new, growing interest among linguists in pursuing the comparative study of South American languages and their near and remote neighbors. In particular he pursues "the so-called non-Polynesian element in Polynesian" using, among others, the Rapanui names for numbers, which he refers to as "alien."

Schuhmacher finally concludes his detailed analysis by admitting that we have been unsuccessful in proving a linguistic contact between Polynesia and South America because "no such contact [may ever] have taken place." He recommends the establishment of another hypothesis to explain "the so-called non-Polynesian element in Polynesia," pointing towards Papua and western Polynesia.

This book is not for everyone. It requires close and tedious reading and lacks the necessary organization and plain language to make it comprehensible to anyone other than a hardened linguist. Were these and similar themes presented more plainly for the average reader to comprehend and ponder, the more popularized pseudo-theories of Heyerdahl, *et al*, would not be pursued so religiously by the general public. *Reviewed by Walter Boggs.*

Stanley, David. 1989. *Micronesia Handbook: Guide to the Caroline, Gilbert, Mariana and Marshall Islands*. Second Edition. Moon Publications. Chico, California.

This companion volume to Moon Publication's *South Pacific Handbook* and the *Tahiti-Polynesia Handbook* places itself apart from typical "sight-seer guidebooks." Mr. Stanley's thought-

provoking pocket volume contains innumerable helpful hints for the rugged adventurer—not the hotel-bound tourist.

Packed among the necessary information on lodgings and restaurants are a thorough series of historical perspectives on each island nation, told honestly and straightforwardly. The maps are excellent and the large (7 page) reading list is invaluable to novice travelers seeking serious information on the individual island groups and their inter-related "Pacific Issues." The book is worth reading for its historical perspective alone, for the author is unafraid to approach such 'delicate issues' as nuclear testing and 'culture clash'—topics one would not normally find in Fielding's or Birnbaum's.

Like all of Moon Publication's "Handbooks," this one is periodically revised. Specialists in related fields have been consulted and the author encourages his readers to send in "comments, corrections, additions, amendments and critiques," thus keeping the facts true and up-to-date. Moon Publications, Inc. 722 Wall St., Chico, CA 95928. US \$9.95. *Reviewed by Walter Boggs.*

—. 1989. *Tahiti-Polynesia Handbook*. Price \$9.95. 225 pages, maps, glossary, bibliography, black and white and color photographs, index. Foreword by Bengt Danielsson. Takes in all the island groups including the Marquesas, Australs, Tuamotus and Gambiers. Even includes exchange rates!

Van Tilburg, Jo Anne. *Klidm of Belau. Guam and Micronesia Glimpses*, 3rd quarter, 1989:45-52. Published in Guam. Photos by David C. Ochsner.



Letters

Dear Editors,

My recent visit to Easter Island made an enormous impression on me because I think that there is no place in the world where such a small population, limited to such a restricted area, and in extreme isolation, produced such a quantity of cultural monuments.

If more of the statues were erected, it would increase the attraction of visitors to the island. This is quite apart from the question whether it is not our duty to restore and guard for the future these wonders of the past. Moreover, creating order out of the heaps of stones that one finds lying around now would also inspire more orderly conduct of the visitors.

These thoughts came to me when I read in *RNJ* 3(1) that the Japanese Hitachi Company intends to send a crane for just that purpose. This inspired me further. With the crane, could we not unite to contribute money and manpower as well as scientific guidance to achieve the goal of creating orderly archaeological sites? This scientific guidance is of course an absolute

necessity in order to avoid a mess. My doubts about achieving this have been taken away now that I have seen that so many eminent people with a thorough knowledge on the subject contribute or write letters to your journal. I think that some of them might be induced to take an active role in such work. Could we take an initiative in this direction? I would be willing to contribute money as well as (my) manpower for this purpose. While I am not a scientist, I have a great interest in the subject and seek a highly inspirational activity in a field that apparently has been neglected up to now.

Herbert von Saher,
Midden Duin en
Daalsweg 6, 2061 AR
Bloemendaal, Holland

Dear Editor:

In regard to Club Med on Easter Island, we sent letters to Chile. To our surprise we received these replies:

1) "...the National Monument Council

and the Tourism Board are totally aware of the necessity of preserving our cultural patrimony [Servicio Nacional de Turismo].

2) "...tourism agencies will only be allowed in the Hanga Roa area" [Jefe Oficina Intereses Maritimes].

3) "...we have not received any request for information on the said project" [Corporacion Nacional Forestal].

We believe that these divergent replies call for a close watch.

G. King,
Sevres, France

Dear Editor:

Aside from the seemingly "good news" on Club Med we have heard from various quarters, has anyone else noticed that there continues to be a huge information gap in regard to the Club Med project?

One branch of the government of Chile says the plan is rejected and another one says, "what project?" I find this very suspicious.

M. Dodds,
Houston, Texas

Rei Miro... continued from page 3...

Provisional Conclusions

A very careful observation of the small *reimiro* of Barcelona, and bearing in mind the external characteristics, its perfect condition and the non-classical typology of the engraved inscription, brings me to the conclusion that this carving is not as old as has been attributed (18th Century) on the leaflet printed in Barcelona on July 1975. A phytological analysis should be carried out to determine its exact age. Contrary to the classical inscriptions, this breast ornament has almost a total absence of anthropomorphic signs and a lack of zoomorphic signs. Only a part of some of the signs are similar to certain glyphs of the fish-shaped wooden tablet studied by Campbell and Silva. There is very little connection at all between it and the fish shaped tablets from Tahiti Museum, nor No. 273245 of the Fuller Collection.

As a curious anecdote, I was very surprised to see, quite by chance, an object which was practically identical to the *re-*

imiro of Barcelona on a poster advertising a public sale in Paris-Drouot, on December 5, 1987. However, it was apparently more recent and without any inscriptions.

At any rate, the city of Barcelona possesses a fine example of art and writing from Easter Island, which can not be ignored any more by scholars on this subject.

Francesc Amorós i Gonell
Indice Historico
Español
University of Barcelona



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The Rapa Nui Information Gap

Research on Easter Island is extremely selective. On the one hand, we have numerous studies of archaeology and ethnology relating to the pre-1862 era, the results of which end up in yet more popular books exalting the 'mysteries,' 'secrets,' or 'enigma' of Easter Island. On the other hand, modern scientific work concentrates on hard science—geology, botany, zoology, physical anthropology, medical studies, linguistics.

What's missing is any apparent interest in the Rapanui people and their history (not prehistory), recent development, relationship to the land, or current socio-political problems. *Rapa Nui Journal* Vol. 3 (Summer 1989) included two letters with entirely opposing viewpoints concerning the need to include socio-political material in the journal. Why this lack of interest? Do we have a conspiracy of silence, designed to protect the islanders and/or avoid annoying the Chilean authorities? Or do we have a simple disregard of people who are seen as merely lovable adjuncts to the stars of the landscape, the cold dead artifacts of a forgotten culture?

The real mystery of Easter Island has nothing to do with *moai*, linguistics, or sea voyages. The real mystery is the general lack of interest in what happened on the island after the disaster of 1862 and in what

is going on there now. The lack of historical or social science (political, economic, social) research is obvious and disturbing.

So much so that in the 1970's I began a major one-man historical social science project to help fill this information gap. So far the major results are four articles and a book:

1. "Easter Island: The Scottish Connection," *Geographical Review*. 68, 1978, 145-56.

2. "The Development of Tourism on Easter Island," *Geography* 65, 1980, 137-38.

3. "The Annexation of Easter Island: Geopolitics and Environmental Perception," *Canadian Journal of Latin American Studies* 6, 1981, 67-80.

4. "Easter Island, Pluralism and Power," pp. 157-172 in C. Clarke, D. Ley, and C. Peach (eds.) *Geography and Ethnic Pluralism*. London: Allen & Unwin, 1982.

5. *The Modernization of Easter Island*. Victoria, B.C.: Western Geographical Series, 1981. (ISBN 0315-2022 vol. 19). pp. xvi + 306; 36 figures, 50 black and white plates; 29 color plates.

The history of the book itself is of some interest. Preparatory to receiving a Canadian publication subsidy, the manuscript was read by several anonymous referees.

J. Douglas Porteous

One of these proved extremely difficult, objecting, *inter alia*, to my (fairly mild) comments on the failings of official policy, my less than warm appreciation of General Pinochet, and my division of Rapa Nui's modern history into a colonial period (to 1888), a neo-colonial period (1888-1952), and a period of internal-colonialism (after 1952). The manuscript was then difficult to place with major publishers, most of whom made the same kind of comment, viz.: 'Easter Island means 'stone heads' and there's no market in writing about anything else.' Finally, publication subsidies from the Social Science Federation of Canada and my own university (for the color plates) led to a successful outcome.

Meanwhile, books and videos on the 'mysteries' of Easter Island continue to appear in profusion in many languages, often repeating each other, perpetuating the same errors, and almost always failing to consider the present Rapa Nui people as of any great importance.

Public knowledge of Rapa Nui, therefore, continues to be strongly skewed in favour of the ancient and the sensational. This bias is supported by academic research, with its tremendous emphasis on prehistory. I'm getting used to this imbalance, but because of my preference for living people over dead ancestors I still find it rather odd.

The Rapanui Proposal for Autonomy

(from *El Mercurio de Santiago*, 14 October 1989)

The Consortium of Parties for Democracy received and accepted a document presented by the Consejo de Ancianos of Easter Island in which they set forth the foundations of new legislation for the Rapanui people which would require constitutional reform.

"Our proposal is inspired by the recognition and the protection of the autonomy of the Rapanui people, and especially the fact that the territory of Rapa Nui is the private property of the ancestral tribes and of the present day successors of the Rapanui people."

It adds that the Rapanui people are a community that ethnically, linguistically, culturally, socially, economically and politically have been maintained on the margin of the rest of the Chilean nation.

The document goes on to say that the Rapanui people need judicial recognition of certain socio-economic conditions and that "the restitution of property is a matter of essential importance." The most suitable way to accomplish this is to establish constitutional reform guaranteeing the rights of the minority.

The document proposes the crea-

tion of a Corporation for the Development of Isla de Pascua, which will receive government land that currently forms part of the Rapa Nui National Park, administrated by SASIPA. The said corporation will exercise jurisdiction exclusively over Isla de Pascua with the sole exception of those lands that are in the dominion of individuals.

In educational matters, it proposes that teaching in the Isla de Pascua school will be at least 50% Rapanui. Teachers will have to learn and teach the Rapanui language.

Metei: The Canadian Medical Expedition to Easter Island

In 1964-65 a Canadian medical expedition spent approximately one year on Rapa Nui at a time of considerable change (airport construction; the 'revolt' by islanders against mainland mismanagement; etc.) The expedition was known as METEI—Medical Expedition to Easter Island—and is mentioned in two popular travel books (see *Rapa Nui Journal* Vol 3, No. 2, Summer 1989, p.8.)

Unfortunately, the above-mentioned article continues: "The study by the Canadians has never been published and the scientific knowledge gained there seems to be lost." I'd like to provide more accurate information on this point.

Some of the results of the medical research carried out by METEI were made public at the International Symposium on the Microbiology of Easter Island held April 26-28, 1971 in Montreal, Quebec. A publication was also produced:

Nogrady, Georges L. (editor) *The Microbiology of Easter Island* (1974). Published in Montreal by Georges L. Nogrady, M.D. (4662 Victoria Avenue, Montreal, P.Q. Canada) as the "Proceedings of an International Symposium held in Montreal, 1971."

The report appears to be in more than one volume, but I possess only Volume 1, which comprises xix + 306 pp. Its contents are as follows:

- Part 1: Rapa Nui staphylococci (10 papers, with discussion)
- Part 2: Human defence against infectious diseases (2 papers)
- Part 3: Finding list of Rapa Nui human staphylococcus isolates and human serum samples
- Part 4: Census of the sampled Rapa Nui native population in 1964-65 as regards staphylococci and sera
- Part 5: Recommendations for further studies with Rapa Nui blood and serum samples
- Part 6: Map of Rapa Nui
- Part 7: District map of Hangaroa village
- Part 8: Staphylococcus sampling map of Hanga Roa village (1964-65)
- Part 9: Map indicating houses with identical numbers in Hangaroa village (1964-65)
- Part 10: District-house and house-district listings in Hangaroa village

J. Douglas Porteous

University of Victoria, Canada

These parts are followed by abstracts in French, German and Spanish, lists of key works, and the author, subject, and bibliographic indexes. No indication is given of the contents of other possible volumes.

It is clear from the existence of this and much other fugitive material that our subject, Rapa Nui Studies, badly needs a large, indexed, and annotated bibliography listing all known publications in all languages. Perhaps some kindly soul will get to work on this?



Editor's Note: One of the major roles of the permanent Librarian at the Mulloy Research Library on Rapa Nui will be to create just such a Master Rapa Nui Bibliography. A preliminary bibliography will be one of the first official publications of the Library. There would be periodic updates. Meanwhile, to help in this effort, interested readers should send a list of their personal "Rapa Nui Bibliographies," in all languages, with abstracts, subject classification and associated information, to **Bibliography**, in care of *RNJ*.

Easter Island Stamp Inquiry

Although I am a field geographer, I am also a serious postal-historian with a special affection for Easter Island. In researching for a postal-history Handbook, I am seeking (to borrow, buy, or photocopy) any and all Easter Island "covers" (entire envelopes bearing stamps with Isla de Pascua postal markings), from regular mail, any time period. I especially seek any covers that came via USAF or NASA* with C.Z. stamps, or APO 09877 postmarks, etc., also with Chilean stamps. Anything appreciated. Contact:

Dr. Gale J. Raymond
Quintana Institute
P.O. Box 35695
Houston, TX 77235 USA

* Via USAF or NASA. A few people were able to get mail to USA faster through courtesy of the USA personnel who put it into their own official mail, or via "shirt pocket" mail systems.



Kiea Editions, on Policarpo Toro Street on Rapa Nui, has created scores of cards like this for all seasons and occasions, including Xmas Cards with several different island drawings. (50¢ ea. US). They are designed and drawn by César Aguilera. Write: Helen Williams, Isla de Pascua.

What's New in Hanga Roa

From El Mercurio de Valparaiso, 25 July, 1989, comes this report: Medical equipment valued at more than \$80,000 will be sent to Rapa Nui this October, on the next shipment from the mainland. Financed by the National Development Fund (FND) and the International Development Bank (IDB), this equipment includes a high temperature pressure sterilizer, another kind of sterilizer, X-ray equipment, a cardiac monitor, an echograph, a transportable incubator, an instrument that detects fetal heartbeats, a vaporizer for children, dental equipment, wheel chairs, and other miscellaneous things. This equipment will provide better medical attention for the islanders.

A distressing report of vandalism to one of the island's best cave paintings was reported to CONAF by Dr. Jo Anne Van Tilburg. During recent field work on Motu Nui, it was noted that cuts of up to 7 cm deep had been made at several points around the painting, apparently in an attempt to remove it intact. Flakes of stone with paint on them also were observed on the floor of the cave. It is not known when the damage was done, but CONAF officials note that it must have occurred between last year's site inspection and July 1989.

Dr. Ben Finney, Department of Anthropology, University of Hawai'i, was on the island briefly in July. Finney is famed for his work with the Polynesian Voyaging Society and the sailing canoe, Hokule'a. He presented a lecture to islanders on the history of the Hokule'a project.

Salvage divers from Valparaiso have been looking at debris left on the ocean floor by the wreck of the Regent Oak, and a group from Surfer Magazine was on the island for two weeks, filming surfers in action along the coast. The surfers were Brazilian champions.

A fire that blackened the slopes of Rano Raraku was reported to have cracked some of the *hare paenga* stones that lie around the south side of the crater. We will try to give a full update in an upcoming issue of *RNJ*.

José Fati, one of the most valuable and interesting of Rapa Nui informants, was recently lost to cancer. Sr. Fati had been treated for the disease on the mainland and then returned to the island only days before his death. He had been an important source of Rapa Nui traditions to a number of investigators, including Fr. Englert and Thomas Barthel. Most recently, he had worked with the Universidad de Chile survey teams and with Jo Anne Van Tilburg's statue project. His warmth and good humor will be sorely missed.

Chile has provisionally accepted a bid for 51% of the state airline, LAN-Chile, by a group associated with SAS. There is talk of remodeling the existing fleet of planes, replacing the 707s. This put an end to the hopes of executives and employees of LAN who seriously intended to acquire the airline. It is hoped that within two years there will be new routes crossing the Pacific.

The Consejo Regional de Desarrollo (COREDE) recently elected mayors of 25 communities in the Quinta region. Among those elected was a new mayor of Easter Island: Juan Edmunds Rapahango. Congratulations to the new *alcade*!

Earthwatch crew members, under the direction of Dr. Christopher Stevenson, are beginning another field season on the island. Excavations will be conducted on the south coast in Quadrant 6, and in the center of the island, in Quadrant 10. The focus of this year's work will be village settlements and settlement patterns. The inland sites are at the foot of Mt Terevaka and are extremely interesting. Square house foundations—some 300 of them—were identified a few years back by Claudio Cristino and Patricia Vargas of the Instituto de Estudios of the Universidad de Chile. The house foundations are along ravines, and excavations carried out by the Universidad de Chile uncovered wood working tools, possibly used for harvesting the great trees that formerly grew on the mountain (the name "*Terevaka*" means "to pull out canoes"!). The square foundations are similar to those found in the Marquesas, and appear to be very early.

Dr. Stevenson is being assisted in the field by José Miguel Ramirez of the Fonck Museum, Viña del Mar.

Georgia Lee, Ph.D.
Publisher and General Editor

Alan Davis-Drake
Editor and Design

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